A quarterly newsletter for WDVA employees

Call 1-800-562-2308 for Statewide assistance

www.dva.wa.gov

February 2002

Volume 2 Issue 4

Mapping Out The Future

As milestones in implementation of the Master Plan are achieved, it is increasingly important to stay connected to each other and to those we serve.

In an effort to keep communication flowing throughout the agency and the veterans community, Master Plan Updates will be published in the middle of each month to provide information on meetings, deadlines and achievements made by each of the three Master Plan teams.

With funding approval for the Master Plan, three teams have been formed to manage the many details of this plan. The teams are:

- Operations Project Team Team Leader, John Lee
- Construction Team Team Leader, Gary Condra
- Continuum of Care Team Team Leader, Jerry Towne

Each team has met at least once and will continue holding regular meetings. Master Plan Updates will provide a brief update on items discussed during each of the three meetings, so we can all stay informed and be aware of upcoming milestones and the potential for change around us.

Master Plan Status

Funding approval from both the state legislature and the federal Department of Veterans Affairs has moved WDVA into the implementation process of the major elements of the Master Plan.

- **July 2001:** \$16.5 million was approved by the state legislature.
- **November 2001:** Congress and the President approved a \$100 million budget for state home construction nationwide.
- **December 2001:** Federal VA chose Washington State as the #1 priority in the nation and committed \$30.7 million of the \$100 million for the Master Plan replacement construction project.
- **January 2002:** WDVA and the Department of General Administration began selecting a project manager and architect in preparation of breaking ground during summer 2002.
- **January 2002 2004:** Development & implementation of the Orting Transition Program.
- Summer 2005: Projected opening of the new Retsil facility.



Construction Team Meeting

Working Group Reports

Operations Project Team: This team will manage the requirements of the agency's Master Plan which includes oversight of the construction of the new 240-bed facility at Retsil and development of the Continuum of Care at Orting.

- The team is discussing the recommendation to begin demolition of buildings 1-5 at Retsil during the summer of 2002. Discussions continue on this issue with both the Architect & Engineering firm and the Project Manager.
- A communication plan is being developed to keep staff, residents and the veterans community informed on the progress the agency is making in the Master Plan.
- A list of all stakeholders is being developed. Development of such lists will provide easy reference to individuals or groups who may be interested in getting information or in getting involved.

See The Future page 2

The Future from page 1

Construction Team: This team will see that the 240-bed facility is completed and occupied on time – within the budget allotted.

- The construction team is responsible to submit grant applications, manage the logistics of a large construction project, and select WDVAs "partners" in the construction process, including; the General Contractor/Construction Manager (GCCM), General Administration (GA) Project Manager, and Architect/Engineering firm.
- Progress on the selection of partners:
 GA Project Manager Bob Dickson
 Architect/Engineering firm NBBJ
 GCCM to be selected mid-April

Continuum of Care Team: This team will be responsible for completing a report to the legislature in September 2002 which outlines a transition plan and program for the Orting Soldiers Home, including costs and funding assumptions.

• The team discussed the recently passed Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001. This bill authorizes up to \$60 million in 2002 and \$75 million in 2003, to fund VA's Grant & Per Diem program offering grants to state and local governments that serve homeless veterans.

The Notice of Funding Availability for these grants is released in the spring of each year. It was recommended by this team that WDVA package a grant submission for the spring of 2002 to enhance the program being developed at Orting. It is important to note, the program at Orting would not be dependent on receiving this grant, the grant would simply enhance the program. It was recommended that a grant application be submitted to develop a pilot program for homeless women veterans, details of the program are currently being discussed.

If you have questions regarding any of the above information, or on the Master Plan in general, please contact Heidi Audette at (360) 725-2154 or by e-mail at, heidia@dva.wa.gov.



NCOA Rep. Oria Berndt (left) presents checks to the Superintendents and VAAC Rep. for each home, along with Director John King.



NCOA Donates Funds Enhancing Homes' Programs

The National Non-Commissioned Officers Association recently presented Retsil and Orting with checks (totaling almost \$10,000.00) to purchase new equipment identified to enhance the facilities quality of care for residents.

At WVH, a motorized screen and projector for the auditorium will be purchased. The 6'6" by 11'6" screen will be ceiling mounted and used for movie matinees and to augment BINGO, for those residents with vision difficulties. In addition, it will eliminate the need to rent the equipment for special events such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day programs.

At WSH, a special cart, called a Snoezelen A la Carte, has been chosen. The Snoezelen program engages all five senses at once, and can be used to either provide sensory stimulation or destimulation and relaxation. Staff at Orting have already identified many uses for the cart, with Nursing using it at night to comfort residents, and Social Services, Therapy and Recreation staff already lining up beneficial uses for daytime activities.

WDVA is grateful for the patronage of NCOA, both past and present, and for the ability to enhance the lives of our residents with their gift.

OF

HOW IS DIVERSITY DEFINED?

According to the **National Association for Diversity Management (NADM),** diversity refers to the collective characteristics that make a person or a group of persons distinctive.

STATE

Webster's Dictionary defines diversity as: different, distinct, or varied.

The popular belief that diversity is about managing and integration of minorities, culturally "foreign" groups or people with disability is a common misunderstanding.

Outward appearance is a small part of being diverse.

The idea of diversity involves a fullness of ideas, perceptions, traditions and ways of living. Each person is unique, based on their life experiences.

Recognizing, understanding and accepting this uniqueness is diversity.



www.nadm.org/

The newly formed WDVA Valuing Diversity Committee would like to hear from employees who contribute to their community away from the workplace. Please contact any of the following members:

Wash Soldiers Home: Lynn Zemke:4511

Gary Klein:4503

AFFAIRS

Wash Veterans Home: George Tainatongo

Billy Woodley:4712 /4356

Spokane Vet Home: Sandie Wollan:344-5775

Central Office: Glenda Vick:2174

Vet Services: Cherise McArthur:478-6995

Gary Clark is volunteering for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's "New Connections" program. He helps by providing clothing vouchers to homeless and recently released incarcerated veterans.

This program is available every day to veterans. Last year Gary provided \$1,465 in vouchers to 58 veterans. These veterans would otherwise qualify for vouchers provided by WDVA's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program or the King Co. Veterans Incarcerated Program.

"It pleases me to provide a small hand-up, not a hand-out, to veterans in an attempt to try to help others," Gary stated.

MLK Jr. Day - A Day For Serving

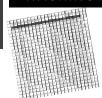
We want to thank you all for traveling all the way north to Everett to help us give a very moving patriotic salute and welcome home to the USS Ingraham and her crew! It was very special to the sailors and their families, and we hope it was as special for you. There is no doubt this salute and homecoming will long be remembered by all. You did GOOD!! Thank you again!! You all are absolutely the best!!

Sincerely,
Pam and Roger Young
The Northwest Veterans Newsletter

(Right) Debbie Kettelhut and Colleen Gilbert were among the flag bearers along the pier as the USS Ingraham docked in Everett.



STATE



Medical Records –

One Of Many Agency Backbones

The successful operation of any agency depends on the teamwork of all, and Medical Records is a large part of WDVA's team. They provide ready access to a resident's history, from admission to discharge, and the importance of that record keeping is taken very seriously by the dedicated employees charged with this responsibility at Retsil and Orting. As new laws evolve, requiring more stringent attention to privacy, continual on-the-job learning becomes essential.



Ann Brown

Washington Soldiers Home employee Ann Brown has found a way to enhance her job skills while saving the state money. Brown, a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT), handles the medical records at the home. She is also chairman of the Long Term Care Health Information Managers education committee, where she is

responsible for setting up quarterly workshops for the group. These workshops keep Health Information Managers of long term care facilities current on industry changes. In exchange for volunteering for LTCHIM, Brown – who has been with WDVA for eleven years – is able to attend the workshops at no cost to the agency. Brown has four children and is the proud grandmother of two-month old twins, Hanna and Abby.



Melissa Wilt

Melissa Wilt, a RHIT, handles medical records at the Washington Veterans Home and is a member of LTCHIM's education committee, as well as a past co-chair of LTCHIM. Wilt has been with WDVA for four years, after spending six years at Harrison Memorial Hospital. She began her career as a Hospital

Corpsman in the U.S. Navy, and she and her husband settled in Puget Sound after his retirement from the U.S. Navy. They have one daughter.

John Jackson, medical records technician at the Washington Veterans Home, spent 20 years as a Hospital Corpsman in the U.S. Navy. His continuing mission is to provide quality services to the veterans at Retsil, and for the past 26 years he has enjoyed providing everyday services to fit their needs.



John Jackson

All three agree the security of a resident's records is their first priority and plan to continue WDVA's long history of implementing privacy laws and protections for the benefit of residents.

Agency Presents First "All Over It" Award

Information Service's Bob Murphy is the recipient of the "All

Over It" Award, presented to him Dec. 14 by WDVA staff.

At WDVA, when an employee has a problem with their computer, the response from Information Services is "We're all over it". They fix the problem, you're happy, they're happy, and life is good.

But, life in the land of technology provides constant challenges, and recent computer viruses were damaging

enough to tempt the bravest computer techs to run and hide.

The Nimda2 virus that hit computers on Sept. 18 definitely fit that category. Bob Murphy chose not to run and hide, and instead spent the week concentrating on the problem.

On Monday, Bob was in Spokane setting up computer operations at the new home. Tuesday the Nimda2 Virus attacked. Bob recieved numerous pages about problems at Retsil. Espie's computer wouldn't work. Bob attempted to clean her hard drive remotely from Spokane. Espie called again with the same problem which Bob again fixed, from Spokane (keep in mind he had a job to finish in Spokane and this was taking all of his time). Bob also received an E-mail alert from DIS about the Nimda2 virus.

Mary Saad with her son Pat at the Spokane

Veterans Home Grand Opening.

OF

Tribute to Mary – "Mom, Sister, Teacher, Nurse, Angel"

STATE

The Spokane Veterans Home irst resident, Mary Saad, is gone, eaving behind a wealth of memories.

Lisa Claflin, the Home's Direcor of Nursing, had the privilege of ittending Mary's funeral, which was standing room only. All nine of Mary's grandchildren participated as easket bearers, and Mary's daughter Michelle and son Pat gave the eulogy.

Even though Lisa cared for Mary or only a short time, she was touched o be able to hear about Mary's life, and wanted to share some of that with you.

Mary, a nurse, served as a Lieuenant in the U. S. Army during World

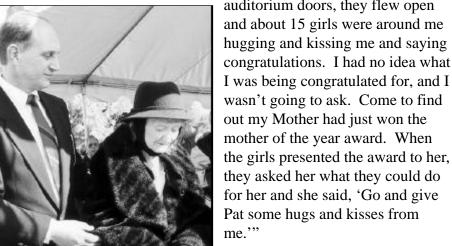
War II. Born and raised on a farm in Varnville, South Carolina, she had 8 brothers and sisters, including her twin brother Carroll.

Her greatest fear, while serving in the military, was of being faced with administering aid to Carroll, a ground soldier serving at the same time. Fortunately, that fear was never realized, and Carroll, along with two surviving sisters, sent notes to be read at the funeral. Those notes carried a common message of Mary's love of the Lord and ner caring for others.

Pat spoke of the many great things his mother did for 11m over the years, and chose this one to share:

"When I was a senior in High School, I had a lot of

friends, but not a steady girl. One day, I was walking down the hall, and just as I was about to pass the auditorium doors, they flew open and about 15 girls were around me



At the Spokane Veterans Home grand opening celebration last September, Mary was presented an American flag from

Congressman George Nethercutt, which was then presented to the Home.

The flag on Mary's casket was presented to her nephew, a retired colonel, and it, too, was presented to the Home.

"As a fellow veteran," said Claflin, "the greatest honor I could show Mary was to salute her as she was buried."

"The only thing you take with you when you're gone is what you leave behind."
--John Allston

Wednesday, Bob drove back from Spokane, arriving at at 1 m., and worked most of the night. Thursday, he worked all day, nally coming up with a solution to get rid of the virus and bring le agency back on-line with the state e-mail and network /stems.

On Friday, Bob worked all day getting the computers back p.

Saturday he spent the day at the homes getting all the fected computers back on the network.

Monday, the Troj_Vote worm virus attacked the state omputers.

Because of the corrective steps Bob took during the first virus tack, the damage was much less than it would have been," said

IS manager Brad Babayan.

Tuesday, Bob returned to Spokane to finish the computer set up and attend ADL training.

In all, Bob worked some 54 additional hours over a 2-week period attending to this particular crisis.

Most staff did not know this was all going on," said Deputy Director John Lee. "Bob did what needed to be done, with a "can-do" attitude and with the mindset he was just doing his job."

"Bob exemplifies what service is all about – continually displaying the pride he takes in the quality of his work."

STATE

Reengineering The Way We Do Business

VCSCs Serving Statewide



Cherise McArthur



Lonnie James



Lynda Reese



Jerry Pfannenstiel

The Master Planning process revealed that a large number of veterans went without services because the delivery system did not address their needs.

A Veterans Service Reengineering process was initiated in 2000 to determine how to better serve Washington's veterans. As a result, several field service offices were closed and Veterans Community Service Coordinator (VCSC) positions were established to seek out and provide assistance to veterans in their own communities.

Goals of the reengineering project include:

- ◆ Developing a network of service brokers who perform outcome-based case management;
- ♦ Periodic customer surveys to ensure the highest quality of service.

The VCSCs interact with community service providers, enabling them to assist veterans in obtaining all needed services as close to their homes as possible. They improve the community's awareness of the needs of the veterans in their area, and are highly effective in providing homeless intervention services and referrals to other support programs.

Veterans Information and Assistance Fairs are a piece of the continuing effort to make veterans aware of the services available to them both from the VA and their communities. These fairs are increasing in number each year with VCSCs hosting approximately 40 fairs across Washington State in 2002.

During fiscal year 2000-2001, WDVA provided client services to over 40,000 veterans and family members, resulting in the submission of 7,284 claims for state and federal veterans' benefits. Compensation and pension claims bring approximately \$600 million into Washington State's economy each year.

Fair Schedule

Olympia

Feb 11 8am-8pm South Puget Sound Community College 2011 Mottman Rd SW,

Forks

Feb 22 11am-6pm VFW Post #9106 S. Spartan Ave

Retsil

Mar 8 11am-6pm WA Veterans Home 1141 Beach Dr.

Tacoma

Mar 11 8am-8pm Tacoma Community College 6501 S. 19th St

Bellingham

Mar 23 10am-5pm American Legion 1688 W. Baker View Rd

Steilacoom

Apr 8 8am-8pm Pierce College 9401 Far West Dr. SW

Richland

Apr 12 9am-4pm VFW Post #7952 1369 George Washington Way

Port Angeles

Apr 12 11am-6pm The Armory Mall 228 W. 1st St

Pasco

Apr 26 10am-5pm National Guard Armory 127 W. Clark St.

Oak Harbor

Apr 27 10am-5pm Senior Center 51 SE Jerome St.

AFFAIRS

PERS 3 - New Retirement Plan For Members Of The Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) Plan 2.

STATE

With the passage of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6530 by the 2000 Legislature and its signature into law by Governor Locke, a new optional retirement plan was added to the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). The new plan, PERS Plan 3, has two components. The defined benefit component, funded by employer contributions, will provide members with a guaranteed benefit, similar to what is currently provided in PERS Plan 2. The defined contribution component, funded by member contributions, will allow members to direct the investment of their member contributions, by choosing from several investment options and programs.

Current PERS Plan 2 members will be provided the option of transferring to PERS Plan 3. New members hired after the plan effective dates will have the option of joining Plan 2 or Plan 3. The new legislation does not impact PERS Plan 1 members.

Current PERS Plan 2 members will have from March 1, 2002, through August 31, 2002, to decide whether to remain in PERS Plan 2 or transfer to PERS Plan 3. New members, hired on or after March 1, 2002, will have 90 days to choose between PERS Plan 2 and PERS Plan 3.

For additional information, visit www.wa.gov/ DRS/drs or contact your human resource department.





New Laws Expand Features Of Washington State Deferred **Compensation Program**

Beginning January 2002, increased contribution limits, new 50+ catch-up rules, larger limits for existing catch-uprules, investing in more than one plan and tax credits for some program participants are providing improvements to the DCP program.

For additional information on the changes, go to the DCP website at www.wa.gov/DRS/dcp or call the DCP Information Line at 1-888-327-5596 (for TDD call 1-877-847-6041). Representatives are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Pacific Time. Or, contact DCP by email: dcpinfo@drs.wa.gov.

Public Employee Benefit Board (PEBB) is switching from Nationwide to Liberty Mutual

As a service to its members, the PEBB program provides access to auto and home insurance coverage through a group contract with Nationwide Insurance. Effective March 1, 2002, the PEBB program will have a new carrier for group auto and home insurance—Liberty Mutual. The Health Care Authority, which oversees the PEBB program, requested bid proposals from auto and home insurance carriers last year, and chose Liberty Mutual.

For additional information, go to www.wa.gov/ hca/pebb/nationwide

Even with all our modern conveniences, life isn't easy. There never seems to be enough time in the day to care for our families, our communities and our careers—much less our own health. Soccer practices compete with conference calls. Grocery shopping and housework are waiting their turn. The pressure that comes from trying to be a competent, committed family member and a fit, healthy human being can be overwhelming. Also, it seems that those of us who aren't able to devote all of our time to health and fitness are made to feel less healthy because of it.

Health and fitness are becoming far too complicated. Perhaps it is time for some balance and simplicity. Here are a few easy to follow healthy ideas from the United Health Foundation:

PLAY WITH YOUR DOG

Apart from the sheer joy you'll bring to Bowser, consider this: The increased cardiovascular activity promotes healthy heart and lungs, and all that dodging and quick-start/quick-stop motion not only builds muscles, but it also sharpens our "fasttwitch" muscles, which in turn influences reaction time. Furthermore, time spent with something you love is always time well spent!

SMILE

A smile can subtract years from your face and say more about you than hours of conversation. Smiling can also tone three groups of facial muscles, and firm, supple muscles make for a healthier complexion. Smiling can stimulate glands, hair follicles and blood, all of which nourish and revitalize your skin. And a smile is a wonderful thing to behold. So give somebody a giftand get an instant facelift!

STRETCH!

Not only does it fee s-o-o-o good, but stretching also keeps your body flexible so it will do what you want, when you want. And studies show that regular stretching can also lead to weight loss. Here's how it works: When we stretch, we engage muscles that become more developed over time. Muscles take up less space in our bodies than fat, and they also burn a lot of calories to survive. So stretching effectively turns our bodies into fat-burning machines. Stretching is also a stress reliever. And did you know that regular stretching can actually increase your height?

High Blood Pressure Meds Reduce PTSD Nightmares

By Murray Raskind, M.D.



Murray Raskind, M.D.

Trauma nightmares are common and often persistent problems for traumatized veterans with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). We have discovered that a long available medication used to treat high blood pressure and prostrate enlargement, is very effective for reducing trauma nightmare frequency and intensity, while improving sleep.

This medication called prazosin, blocks excess adrenaline activity in the brain at night. Hundreds of veterans at VA Puget Sound have been treated safely and effectively with prazosin for periods up to four years so far. The medication is inexpensive, but requires a prescription and an evaluation by your health care provider before use. If your provider has questions about prazosin for PTSD nightmares, please have him or her contact Murray Raskind, M.D., Director, Mental Health Service, VA Puget Sound at 206-768-5375 or murray.raskind@med.va.gov.

Upcoming Events

February

National Black History Month http://fe.infoplease.com/spot/ bhmmilitary1.html

Feb. 10-16, 2002

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans www.va.gov/volunteer/ page.cfm?pg=4

Feb. 17, 2002

Massing of the Colors 3:00 p.m. Soldiers Field House Fort Lewis

March

National Social Workers Month www.naswdc.org/resources/ sw_month/default.html

March 12, 2002

VAAC & Commanders' Call Meeting Retsil Auditorium

March 25, 2002

Congressional Medal of Honor Day www.defenselink.mil/fag/ pis/14.html

April 9, 2002

Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day

April 6-12, 2002

The National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic www.va.gov/vetevent/wsc/ 2002/default.asp

April 14-20, 2002

Paralyzed Veterans of America Awareness Week www.pva.org/

April 21-27, 2002

National Volunteer Week "Celebrate the American Spirit - VOLUNTEER!" www.pointsoflight.org/ programs/programs nvwintroa.htm

May 6-12, 2002

National Nurses Week "Nurses Care for America" www.nursingworld.org/ pressrel/nnw/

May 27, 2002

Memorial Day Observed